General Assembly

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/55/L.79 and Add.1)*]

55/243. The destruction of relics and monuments in Afghanistan

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 53/203 A of 18 December 1998, 54/189 A of 17 December 1999 and 55/174 A of 19 December 2000,

Bearing in mind the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[1] and the need to respect the common heritage of humankind,

Respecting the multicultural, multi-ethnic and historical heritage of Afghanistan,

Deeply concerned and appalled by the Taliban edict of 26 February 2001, ordering the destruction of all statues and non-Islamic shrines in Afghanistan, and by the deliberate ongoing destruction of these relics and monuments which belong to the common heritage of humankind,

Recalling the several appeals made by the General Assembly to all Afghan parties to protect the cultural and historic relics and monuments in Afghanistan, and welcoming recent calls by the Security Council, the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and others, urging the Taliban to halt their destruction,

Noting that the destruction of the statues in Afghanistan, in particular of the unique Buddhist sculptures in Bamiyan, would be an irreparable loss for humanity as a whole,

1. *Strongly calls upon* the Taliban to abide by their previous commitments to protect the cultural heritage of Afghanistan from all acts of vandalism, damage and theft;

2. *Strongly urges* the Taliban to review their edict of 26 February 2001 and to stop its implementation;

3. *Also strongly urges* the Taliban to take immediate action to prevent the further destruction of the irreplaceable relics, monuments or artefacts of the cultural heritage of Afghanistan;

[1] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

4. *Calls upon* Member States to help, through appropriate technical measures, to safeguard the sculptures, including, if necessary, their temporary relocation or removal from public view.

94th plenary meeting
9 March 2001